

Record carrier, apparatus and method.

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The invention pertains to a record carrier storing at least video-related user data and control data in digital form, which control data enable playback control of the user data, which control data comprises at least play control data which defines user data items which are playable, at least selection control data for enabling the user to select and control reproduction  
5 of user data and at least variable control data for operating on user and system variables.

The invention further pertains to an apparatus capable of reproducing user-data under control of control data, the user data and the control data being stored in digital form on a record carrier, which user data comprises at least video data, which control data comprises at  
10 least play control data which defines user data items which are playable and at least selection control data for enabling the user to select and control reproduction of user data items, which control data further comprise variable control data defining operations on user and system variables, which apparatus is provided with control means comprising a processor controllable by said control data.

The invention further pertains to a method of reproducing user-data under  
15 control of control data, according to which method the user data and the control data are read from a record carrier on which these data are stored in digital form, which user data comprises at least video data, which control data comprises play control data, selection control data and variable control data, according to which method user data items are played under control of the play control data, according to which method the selection control data enables the user to  
20 select and control reproduction of user data items, according to which method the variable control data control operations on user and system variables.

Such a record carrier, apparatus and method are known from WO 98/09290.

25 The play control data in the form of Play Lists enables the record and/or playback device to reproduce the user data in a predetermined order. Apart from video data, the user data may contain for example audio data, and data giving information about the video and/or audio data. The selection control data, in the form of Selection Lists enable the user to make a selection out of the available Play Lists by giving input to the apparatus. In addition the known

apparatus can process variable control data by performing arithmetical operations and logical tests. The variable control data enables the apparatus a further way of controlling the playback of user data at the record carrier dependent of the history of user input.

In the known record carrier the variable control data comprises a Statement List  
5 which describes operations on variables and a Conditional List which describes conditional jumps.

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It is a purpose of the invention to provide means which enable more simple  
10 variable control.

For this purpose the apparatus is characterized in that the apparatus is adapted to be controlled by variable control data which comprises instructions for conditional arithmetical operations.

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15 data comprises at least one instruction for a conditional arithmetical operation.

For this purpose the method is characterized in that the variable control data comprises at least one instruction for a conditional arithmetical operation.

The invention is based on the insight that for interactive playback of audio/visual data, the choice of what is to be played back depends on many parameters, such  
20 as the current user input, the history of user input, the region of playback etc. A plurality of the operations necessary for playback control is therefore performed conditionally. As the apparatus of the invention is adapted to be controlled by variable control data which comprises instructions for conditional arithmetical operations, the variable control data can be concise so that less memory space is required and variable control is simplified.

The conditional arithmetical operations are for example addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and modulo calculation. Whether the arithmetic operations specified in the instruction are performed depends on the outcome of a logical test.

In the record carrier of the invention, the variable control data can be clearly structured. Operations which are to be performed conditionally can be arranged in the same  
30 sequence as other operations.

Such a way of control is very suitable for educational purposes: According to instructions in the variable control data the processor can evaluate the progress of the user, for example by evaluating results of user responses upon questions presented by the apparatus.

Depending on the outcome of the evaluation the system can select an educational session to continue with.

In a favorable embodiment the record carrier is characterized in that, the instructions are embedded in Command Lists which further comprise a Command List Header which precedes the instruction and an unconditional goto which succeeds the instruction, and which refers to a next List (e.g. another Command List, a Play List or a Selection List).

It is preferred that each Command List comprises only one instruction apart from the unconditional goto.

This embodiment is advantageous if the record carrier is to be played by an apparatus of the invention in which the same processor which interprets the play control data and the selection control data also interprets the variable control data. The header enables the processor to recognize the type of control data. The unconditional goto instruction passes control to a next List, which may be either a Command List, or for example a Play List, which forms play control data or a Selection List which forms selection control data.

Otherwise the apparatus of the invention can have separate processors for interpreting the variable control data and the other control data. The processors can for example communicate with each other via variables which are stored in a common memory.

These and other aspects of the invention are described with reference to the drawing. Therein:

Figure 1 shows an embodiment of an apparatus in accordance with the invention,

Figure 2 shows the syntax of an embodiment of a Play List,  
Figure 3 shows the syntax of an embodiment of a Selection List,  
Figure 4 shows the syntax of an embodiment of a Command List,  
Figure 5 shows the syntax of possible instructions for the Command List,  
Figure 6 and 7 show the semantics of the conditional portion of these instructions,

Figure 8 shows the syntax of the portion representing arithmetical operations,  
Figure 9 shows an example of a combination of Play Lists, Selection Lists and Command Lists.

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Figure 1 shows a system 10 comprising an apparatus 3 and a record carrier 1 in accordance with the invention. The apparatus is capable of reproducing user-data under control of control data, the user data and the control data being stored in digital form on the record carrier 1. The record carrier 1 is e.g. an optical disc comprising digital audio/video/data information in an embossed information layer.

This information is to be read out by use of an optical stylus 11 (known as such) which supplies the detected data to a decoding and error correcting means 13. The decoded and error corrected data are supplied to a processor 15, which cooperates with a ROM memory 15a and a RAM memory 15b to control and operate on the data flow received from decoding and error correcting means 13. A first task of the controller 15 is to provide control signals, such as velocity control tracking and focusing control signals to the servo system 16. The servo system 16 controls the angular velocity  $\omega$  of the rotating disc 1 as well as the position of the optical stylus 11 with respect to the track of the optical disc 1, which has been shown by the dotted arrow r. Further the servo system 16 controls the focusing of the optical stylus, such that the bright bundle emitted by the laser is focused on the information layer of the optical disc (which has been shown by the dotted arrow f).

A second task of the processor 15 is to control the audio and video bit stream to the dedicated decoders 21, which decode the e.g. MPEG2 coded video and audio and supply the decoded video to a display 23 and the decoded audio to a speaker or speaker system 25 (e.g. a multi channel sound system).

The information to be reproduced by the display 23 and sound system 25 is selectable by user input, which is received e.g. by direct control of selection buttons 19 of the input means 17 of the optical disc player 3 or via a remote control device 17a having selection buttons 19a. Of course, other possibilities of control are available and adequate, such as but not limited to: voice control, control via a direct link to a personal computer or via a telephone modem etc.

The processor 15 of the shown embodiment can be a relatively low power microcontroller having 1 MIPS (million instructions per second) capacity. It is possible to have the video and audio MPEG2 decoding realized by a software controlled processor 15, which then should be a high speed high power process unit equipped with adequate amounts of RAM and ROM memory 15a and 15b.

The control data stored by the record carrier comprises at least play control data, here in the form of Play Lists, which defines user data items which are playable (also denoted as Play Items), for example a plurality of user data items which are playable in

sequence. The control data further comprises selection control data, here in the form of Selection Lists, for enabling the user to select and control reproduction of user data items. The control data further comprises variable control data, in the form of Command Lists, defining operations on user and system variables. A more detailed description is given below. Therein hexadecimal numbers are preceded by a \$ and binary numbers are preceded by a %.

The syntax of the Play List is shown in Figure 2. The semantics of the entries therein are as follows:

The **Play List Header** is a code which identifies the beginning of the Play List, in this example having the value \$10.

10 The **Number Of Items (NOI)** gives the number of Play Items in this Play List. The minimum value of NOI is 1.

The **List ID** gives the List ID Number. Preferably the List ID Number is unique among all Lists on the record carrier.

15 The **Previous List Offset** contains a reference to the List that is to be interpreted on execution of a "PREVIOUS" function. Preferably that List is the List which would be reproduced before the current Play List when reproducing the contents of the record carrier in default order, so that the effect of the "PREVIOUS" function corresponds to the intuitive notion that the user has of this function.

20 The **Next List Offset** contains a reference to the List that is to be interpreted after interpretation of the current Play List is completed. Interpretation of the List referred to in the Next List Offset may also be realized immediately by execution of the "NEXT" function.

25 The **Return List Offset** contains a reference to the List that is to be interpreted when a "RETURN" function is executed. The "RETURN" function gives the user control at a higher hierarchical level. The user may for example have selected the current Play List out of number of selections comprised in a Selection List (described below). In that case execution of the "RETURN" function during interpretation of the current Play List has the effect that control is passed to the said Selection List.

30 **Playing Time** defines the time to play from each Play Item of this Play List starting from the beginning of the Play Item. In practice the time to play can not exceed the duration of any Play Item. The value of this entry can be set to \$0000 to achieve that the Play Items are played completely. The value of this entry may be modified during interpretation of the current Play List, so as to achieve that Play Items have a mutually different playing time.

The **Play Item Wait Time** defines the wait time after playing each Play Item. The wait may be interrupted by a user interaction function. The value of this entry may be modified during

interpretation of the current Play List, so as to achieve different waiting times between the Play Items. The waits may be terminated by a user interaction function (e.g. the "NEXT" function).

**Auto Pause Wait Time** is the wait time at Auto Pause. If a sector is played in which an Auto Pause flag is set, the wait time after play back of the Play Item is finished is the Auto Pause Wait Time instead of the Play Item Wait Time. Likewise this wait time may be interrupted by a user interaction.

The entry **Play Item #n**, represents the identification number of a Play Item. The said number may for example directly refer to a track containing a Play Item or to an entry in a table containing a reference to such a track. The Play Item is for example the whole or part of an MPEG Audio/Video Track, or MPEG encoded Still Pictures with optional MPEG Audio, or MPEG audio without image data.

The syntax of the Selection List is shown in Figure 3. The semantics of the entries are as follows:

The **Selection List Header** identifies the beginning of the Selection List and equals \$18 in this example.

The 8-bit field **Flags** can contain a plurality of flags. In casu each of the bits in the field represents a flag. One flag indicates for example whether Selection Area Fields are present. These Fields contain additional data for use with selection systems that use screen pointing devices. The additional data comprises e.g. coordinates of a rectangular region at the screen which is to be pointed at with the pointing device in order to execute a particular function or to select from a number of options.

The **Number Of Selections (NOS)** gives the number of selections which this List enables.

The **Base Of Selection Number (BSN)** indicates the first selection number of this List.

The definition of the **List ID** is analogous to that of the Play List.

**Previous List Offset:** See the definition of Previous List Offset of the Play List.

The **Next List Offset** is the reference to the List that is interpreted on execution of the NEXT function

**Return List Offset:** See the definition of Return List Offset of the Play List.

The field **Default List Offset** contains an offset to the List which is interpreted upon execution of a "Default Selection" function. With this function the user may indicate that he has no preference for a particular selection for example by striking an arbitrary key not corresponding to a selection.

**Time-out List Offset** gives a reference of a List that is interpreted after Time out i.e. if the wait-time has expired and no user interaction has taken place.

**Wait Time for Time-out** gives the duration for time-out.

**Play Item Number** defines the Play Item to be reproduced when the present Selection List is interpreted. The Play Item is for example a menu indicating the possible options.

**Loop Count & Jump Timing** specifies the number of times that the Play Item specified in the field Play Item Number is to be repeated, and whether said replay of said Play Item should be interrupted immediately upon user interaction or not.

The fields **Selection #BSN Offset** until **Selection #(BSN + NOS -1) Offset** represent the reference to the List that is interpreted when the corresponding selection having a number in the range from BSN until BSN+NOS-1 is made.

The syntax of the Command List is shown in Figure 4.

The semantics of the Command List are as follows:

**Command List Header:** This field identifies the start of a Command List. The value is \$20.

**Instruction Field:** This field defines the operations to be carried out by the processor. Possible instructions are set out in Figure 5.

**Next List Offset:** This field defines the offset to the next List to execute or play.

Figure 5 shows an overview of possible instructions for the Instruction Field of a Command List. The first byte of the instruction is an opcode, indicating the type of operation to be performed and the following 4 bytes are operands. In this Figure, the symbols i,j,k,l represent indices to an array of variables. If accidentally a read or write access is attempted to a reserved location of the array, the command is not executed. The symbols dddd represent a 16 bit signed constant. The symbol offs represent an offset of a next Command List. The third and the fourth bit of the opcode can contain a conditional opcode cond0 or cond1. The semantics for cond0 and cond1 are set out in Figure 6 and 7, resp. A binary value of cond0 being equal to 01, 10 and 11 respectively means that the instruction is only performed if the condition  $V[i] > 0$ ,  $V[i] < 0$ ,  $V[i] = 0$  is fulfilled respectively. If cond0 equals to 00 its meaning is TRUE, hence the remaining portion of the instruction is performed unconditionally. Analogously if the value of cond1 is equal to 01, 10 and 11 the instruction is only performed if the condition  $V[i] > V[j]$ ,  $V[i] < V[j]$ ,  $V[i] = V[j]$  is fulfilled. If cond1 equals to 00 its meaning is TRUE, hence the remaining portion of the instruction is performed unconditionally. In the table of Figure 5 there are four main sets of instructions which are denoted by the first three bits of the opcode. A first set having an opcode starting with the bits 001 comprises arithmetical and logical operations wherein  $V[k]$  and  $V[l]$  are input variables

and  $V[j]$  is an output variable. The type of calculation is determined by bits 5 to 7 of the opcode as set out in Figure 8. Whether the operation is performed depends on the value of the conditional opcode  $cond0$ . In the present embodiment arithmetical operations are addition (ADD), subtraction (MIN), multiplication (MUL), division (DIV) and modulo (MOD).

5 Logical operations are AND, OR and XOR.

The second set has an opcode starting with the bits 010. This set of instructions comprises assignments. The instruction "010  $cond0$  000" provides for assignment of the value of variable  $V[l]$  to variable  $V[k]$  provided that condition  $cond0$  is true. Likewise the instruction "010  $cond1$  001" provides for assignment of the value of the variable  $V[l]$  to variable  $V[k]$  if  
10 condition  $cond1$  is true. The instruction "010  $cond0$  010" provides for assignment of the value of the constant  $dddd$  to variable  $V[j]$  if condition  $cond0$  is true. The instruction "010 00 110" results in a block of variables being assigned the value  $dddd$  while the variable  $V[i]$  greater than or equal to 0. The variable currently being filled is indicated by index  $j+V[i]$ . After each assignment the variable  $V[i]$  is decreased by 1.

15 The third set comprises goto instructions. This set has an opcode starting with the bits 100. Opcodes "100  $cond0$  000" and "100  $cond0$  001" respectively effectuate a jump to the List at address "offs" if  $cond0$  is true and if  $cond1$  is true. Opcodes "100  $cond0$  010" effectuate a jump to the List at address stored in variable  $V[j]$  if  $cond0$  is true. Opcodes "100  $cond0$  100" and "100  $cond1$  101" effectuate a jump to the address "offs" and a decrease of the  
20 value of variable  $V[i]$  by one if respectively  $cond0$  and  $cond1$  are true. The opcode "100  $cond0$  110" effectuates a jump to the address "offs" and a decrease of the variables  $V[i]$  and  $V[j]$  by one.

The fourth set, of which the opcode starts with the bits 110, comprises a wait and goto instruction. If this instruction "110  $cond0$  000" is performed the playback device will  
25 wait during  $V[j]$  seconds for user input. If no input is received within that time interval the control jumps to the list at address "offs".

Apart from user variables, the command list interpreter can also access system variables. The system variables serve as an application programming interface between a so called virtual machine (VM) which processes the commands and the hardware of the  
30 reproducing apparatus. By acting on system variables, the instructions in the Command List can evaluate and/or influence system variables, such as the status of an overlay graphics channel, the setting of the audio channels (mute, mono, stereo, etc.). Additionally the instructions can cause the processor to read other parameters, such as the current disc identification, the current track, the current playing time.



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The following table gives an example of possible variables to be controlled by commands in the Command List. The variables are stored in an array of 256 16-bit registers. The array comprises 16 read/write general purpose variables, having variable index 0-15. These variables are not initialized at the start of the Command List. In an embodiment of the apparatus of the invention the value of these variables is maintained when a record carrier is replaced by another record carrier, for example another record carrier belonging to the same album. The array further comprises 240 registers for system variables comprising reserved registers (variable index 16-207), player decoder registers (variable index 208-223), disc related registers (variable index 224-239), Play List related registers (variable index 240-251) and other system related registers (variable index 252-255).

[illegible]

Table 1 Variable Array

Variable index	Type of register	Description
<i>User variables</i>		
0..15	R/W	get / set 16 bit general purpose variables
<i>System variables</i>		
16..207	--	Reserved
<i>Apparatus decoder registers</i>		
208	R/W	get / set OGT_channel ( 0..3 ) status
209	R/W	get / set Audio_mixing (0..3 ) status
210	R/W	get / set Audio_stream (0..3) status
211..223	--	reserved
<i>Disc related registers</i>		
224	R/W	get / set MPEG_PlayingTime
225	R/W	get / set PlayItem_number (PIN)
226..239	--	reserved
<i>Play List related registers</i>		
240	R/W	get / set List_Offset
241	R/W	get / set Exception_Error List_Offset
242	R/W	get / set User_input
243..251	--	reserved
<i>Other system related registers</i>		
252	R/W	get / set Timer
253	R/W	get / set Shuffle
254	R/W	get / set NV-RAM_block
255	Read Only	get Player Configuration status flags

- The VM can control the reproducing apparatus by setting a system variable, and the reproducing apparatus has then to execute controls that would generate the same status. The reproducing apparatus may reflect its status by setting a system variable, so that it can be read out by the VM.
- 5 Note that a system variable actually corresponds to two different registers, one for read of the

status of the reproducing apparatus, and one for giving a command to the reproducing apparatus. When the player is busy executing a register command, then these values could be different.

The system variables comprised in the table above are now described in more detail.

- 5 **OGT-channel:** The VM may activate an overlay graphics and text channel by setting this system variable. The VM may further determine whether an overlay graphics and text channel is activated, and if so identify the channel by reading said variable. The meaning of the variable is for example defined by the following table.

Table 2 OGT\_channel

Value	Meaning
-1	No OGT_channel displayed
i = 0 to 3	channel i

10 **Audio\_mixing:** The VM may control the audio mixing status of the reproducing apparatus by setting this variable. The VM may also read this variable to verify the current status. The variable has for example the definition given in table 3.

Table 3 Audio\_mixing

Value	Meaning
0	Audio mute
1	Left channel only
2	Right channel only
3	Stereo

15 **Audio\_stream:** This variable serves to control and to verify which audio stream is selected. The selection of the audio stream and the value of the variable may for example correspond according to table 4.

Table 4 Audio\_stream

Value	Meaning
0	No Audio stream selected
1	Stream 1
2	Stream 2
3	Stream 1 + Extended Stream for Surround sound

- 5 **User\_input:** The VM may enable or disable user input by setting this variable to a first or a second value, e.g. 255 and 254 respectively. If user input is enabled the VM may obtain the last user input by reading the variable. The user input may for example be a selection made by the user out of a plurality of options from offered by a Selection List. Examples of values of this variable are given in table 5.

Table 5 User\_Input values

Read value	User input
0..99	Numeric input or last selection
100	Default selection
101	Next
102	Previous
103	Return
--	reserved
254 (\$00FE)	User input disabled
255 (\$00FF)	User input enabled

Write value	meaning
254 (\$00FE)	Disable User input
255 (\$00FF)	Enable User input
else	VOID

- 10 **MPEG\_PlayingTime:** The VM may request the time played of the last MPEG stream from the beginning of the stream by reading this variable. In addition the VM may set this variable and so define the time to play for the next Play Item starting from the beginning of the item. If the value set exceeds the Playing Time of the Play Item, then this function may be discarded. If the value is set to 0 then the Play Item may be played until its end.
- 15 **PlayItem\_number:** The VM can retrieve an identification of the last Play Item which was reproduced by reading this variable. Setting this variable enables the VM to select a Play Item to be played. During play back of a Motion Picture Play Item special playback control as

Pause / Play, Fast Forward etc. may be executed by the reproducing apparatus if the User Input is enabled. It is assumed that a Still Picture remains on screen until next PLAY, even during change of a record carrier.

**List\_Offset:** Reading this variable provides the address of the current command list. The value can be saved in a user variable for a "go sub" Command List function. This function is the general method to goto an other List. This is not a normal gosub function, but by saving the value, a following Command List can find out the offset of the previous Command List and return back. Control of the apparatus can be transferred to another Command List by assigning the address of that Command List to the variable **List\_offset**.

**Exception\_Error List\_Offset:** This variable may contain the address of a Command List to proceed with in case of a non recoverable or exceptional error ( e.g. divide by 0, or illegal Command ).

**Timer:** The VM may set this variable to a positive value. The apparatus will subsequently decrement the variable at regular time intervals, e.g. each 10th of a second ( 100ms ) down to 0 (zero). The VM may subsequently read the variable to verify how much time has passed since the variable was initialized.

**Shuffle:** The VM may obtain the next value from a shuffle sequence by reading this variable. The VM may also generate a shuffle sequence by subsequently assigning the numbers of the items to be reproduced to this variable.

**NV-RAM\_block:** Reading this register provides an identification of a block of user variables which was restored from non-volatile RAM (NV-RAM) at start up. The block is for example identified by a two byte value, wherein the first byte ) indicates the index of the first variable in the block, and the second byte (LSB) the number of variables in the block. Likewise the VM may specify a block of variables to be written to NV-RAM by setting this variable. The player may uniquely allocate an NV-RAM block for each record carrier by using a record carrier identification, or an identification of an album to which the record carrier belongs.

**Player Configuration status flags:** This variable is read only. The bits of the variable serve as flags which indicate the capabilities of the player.

Figure 9 shows an example where Play Lists, Selection Lists and Command Lists control the replay of user data in an English language course. The processor starts interpretation with Command List #1. This Command List effectuates that one or more counters indicating progress of the user are initialized. Values stored in the counters are for example a measure for the knowledge of grammar, for the usage of words, for the number of trials etc. In this example a Command List may comprise a plurality of instructions. In another

embodiment each Command List comprises only one instruction, so that in case of a sequence of commands each of the Command Lists contains a pointer to the Command List having the succeeding instruction.

After the counters are initialized the control is passed to the Play List #1 indicated by the value of the pointer 30 in the field Next\_List Offset of Command List #1. Upon interpretation of the Play List the processor effectuates that a first English module comprising one or more Play Items (not shown) with audio and/or video data is presented to the user. After this module is finished Selection List #1 which is pointed to (31) by the Next\_List Offset of Play List #1 takes over control. This Selection List points to a Play Item (not shown), which presents the user a question about the first English module. The user can respond thereto by making a choice. Dependent on the choice made by the user, control is passed to one of the Command Lists #2a, #2b or #2c via pointers 32, 33 and 34 respectively. The Command Lists evaluate the input of the user, and adapt the scores. The Next\_List Offset of the Command Lists refers (35, 36, 37) to a following Play List #2a, #2b or #2c, which effects the playback of a next English module. This next module can be succeeded by a next Selection List by which a next question is posed to the user. After a plurality of such sessions, comprising presentation of a module and the posing of a question, control is passed to a final Command List #n, which evaluates the history of user input and determines how to proceed the English language course.

Such an evaluation could for example comprise a conditional computation:

if (a>0) then

$$R = (a+b)*(c+d)$$

else if (a<0) then

$$R = (a-b)*(c-d)$$

else

$$R = a*c$$

endif

endif.

Herein R is the result of the calculation and a, b, c, and d are variables.

Such an computation may be implemented in a Command List as follows. Presume that the variables a, b, c, d are stored in the variable registers 0, 1, 2 and 3 and that the result R is stored in variable register 6. Registers 4, 5 are used for storing temporary results p, q. The instructions are shown in a mnemonic which corresponds to the definition according to the table in Figure 4. Bits 5 to 7 are represented by the abbreviations defined in the table of

Figure 8. The parameters between the brackets correspond to the indices i,j,k,l as shown in Table 4. In this case the commands all belong to the group of conditional calculations.

	001 01add (0, 4, 0, 1)	"if $a > 0$ then $p = a + b$ "
	001 01add (0, 5, 2, 3)	"if $a > 0$ then $q = c + d$ "
5	001 01mul (0, 6, 4, 5)	"if $a > 0$ then $R = p * q$ "
	001 10sub (0, 4, 0, 1)	"if $a < 0$ then $p = a - b$ "
	001 10sub (0, 5, 2, 3)	"if $a < 0$ then $q = c - d$ "
	001 10mul (0, 6, 4, 5)	"if $a < 0$ then $R = p * q$ "
	001 11mul (0, 6, 0, 2)	"if $a = 0$ then $R = a * c$ "

- 10 Variable control is relatively simple. No jumps are required and the computation can be described with a relatively small number of commands in comparison with a Command List in which only unconditional calculations can be used.

Whilst the invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it is to be understood that these are not limitative examples. Thus, various modifications may become apparent to those skilled in the art, without departing the scope of the invention, as defined by the claims. Further, any reference signs do not limit the scope of the claims. The invention, as far as incorporated in the reproducing apparatus, can be implemented by means of both hardware and software, and several "means" may be represented by the same item of hardware. The word "comprising" does not exclude the presence of other elements or steps than those listed in a claim. Also, the word "a" or "an" preceding an element does not exclude the presence of a plurality of such elements. In addition, the invention lies in each and every novel feature or combination of features.